

Closed-Circuit Television cameras coming to Bancroft

By Chris Drost

New technology is coming to downtown Bancroft with the installation of Closed-Circuit Television cameras. A total of \$27,473 in funding was obtained through the Ontario Closed-Circuit Television Grant Program. The Town of Bancroft will share in 50 per cent of the costs. The grant is expected to provide \$6 million in funding across Ontario over three periods, 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023. All the new Smart City lighting in the downtown core will be capable of accommodating the new cameras. The hope is to also install it at other locations such as the parks and parking lots. It is a crime deterrent, both the cameras and the new lighting, says Bancroft Mayor Paul Jenkins. CCTV can help identify individuals involved in criminal activity and can gather license plate numbers that can assist with locating criminals. Other communities across Ontario were also recipients of this grant, including, Ajax, Clarington, Niagara Falls, Pickering, Oshawa, St. Catharines, Whitby, Cornwall, Temagami and West Perth, and others. People may be familiar with CCTV if they watch any British crime dramas. According to research by Clarion Security Systems, it is estimated that there are over 7,371,903 CCTV cameras in the UK alone, representing about one camera for every 11 people. The study also indicates that individuals are likely to be captured on CCTV up to 70 times per day. Closer to home, the City of Toronto has 19,236 CCTV cameras and Montreal has 4,420. An analysis by Comparitech says that China has the most CCTV in the world. An IHS Market report estimates there are over one billion CCTV cameras worldwide, and 54 per cent of them are in China. As the use of CCTV has grown internationally, there have been concerns about individual rights to privacy. In Canada, the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada developed a series of guidelines jointly with the RCMP and other stakeholders. One of those guidelines includes, making the camera locations public knowledge. Bancroft will follow any legal guidelines with the CCTV, says Mayor Jenkins. It is anticipated that the use of CCTV technology will improve the safety of citizens and the business community in Bancroft.